

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 L-03 H-01

NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 PA-01 PRS-01 AGRE-00

DHA-02 SCS-03 SCA-01 FS-01 ABF-01 /104 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3046

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL IBADAN

AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, EFIN, EINV, ETRD, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN EXCHANGE SCANDAL

REF: (A) LAGOS 9226, (B) LAGOS 9227

1. IN COVERAGE OF MEA COMMISSIONER GARBA'S AUGUST 16 ADDRESS ON FOREIGN EXCHANGE SCANDAL TO DIPLOMATIC CORPS, MAJOR NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS ARE STRESSING FOREIGN THREAT TO ECONOMIC STABILITY OF NATION. ACCENT APPEARS TO FALL MORE ON CULPABILITY OF INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS THAN ON ILLEGAL MANIPULATIONS OF NIGERIA'S OWN CITIZENS. SAMPLING OF FRONT PAGE AUGUST 17 HEADLINES COMBINES XENOPHOBIA WITH ANXIETY OVER ECONOMY. EXAMPLE INCLUDE: "SABOTAGE* FOREIGN COUNTRIES INDICTED" (NIGERIAN HERALD); "THE WAR AGAINST NIGERIA" (DAILY TIMES); AND "WE SHALL REPEL ECONOMIC AGGRESSION" (NEW NIGERIAN).

2. LEAD PARAGRAPH OF NIGERIAN HEARLD DESCRIBES FMG AS "IN POSSESSION OF ADEQUATE EVIDENCE TO PROVE THAT SOME INDUSTRIAL-
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IZED NATIONS ARE PLANNING TO CRIPPLE THE ECONOMY OF THE NATION." PRESS ARTICLES IN COMMON FIRST FOCUS ON CHARGE THAT NATIONALS OF "SOME INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES" HAVE BEEN IN COLLUSION WITH NIGERIANS, THEN GO ON TO POINT OUT THAT THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES IMPOSE HIGHER PRICES FOR THEIR EXPORTS TO NIGERIA, AND THAT FOREIGN MISSIONS AND NATIONALS HAVE RECKLESSLY FLOUTED RENT DECREE.

3. SHRILL PRESS COVERAGE GENERALLY DIAPPEARED ON AUGUST 18 EXCEPT FOR SPORADIC REPORTS OF REACTION ENGENDERED BY PREVIOUS DAY'S FEATURE STORIES. AUGUST 18 NIGERIAN TRIBUNE, FOR EXAMPLE BOLDLY HEADLINED BACK PAGE SPREAD TELLING OF PATRIOTIC YOUTH MOVEMENT OF NIGERIA'S DEMAND: "THE ONLY WAY TO STOP THIS ECONOMIC SABOTAGE IS TO NATIONALIZE ALL FOREIGN COMPANIES IN THE COUNTRY."

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE ANY RENTAL CONTRACTS WHICH CONTAIN CLAUSES OUT OF LINE WITH FEDERAL DIRECTIVES. WE ISSUING CLASSIFIED WRITTEN CIRCULAR TO ALL AMERICAN STAFF WITH REMINDER WARNING AGAINST ANY IMPROPER PERSONAL CURRENCY EXCHANGE AND DISTRIBUTION OF DUTY FREE ENTRY GOODS OUTSIDE OFFICIAL EMBASSY FAMILY.
WYMAN

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NNN

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